

Vermont Public Manager Program Candidate Criteria Guidelines

Thank you for considering The Vermont Public Manager Program (VPM). VPM is a two-year leadership and management development curriculum that relies on a moderate level of competency in a variety of areas. VPM is not the “first stop” in most employee development plans, but is an intermediate or even advance step in developing leaders in state government. Candidates may be presented for consideration in two ways:

- An individual may apply directly to the program, having received the approval of her/his manager and financial officer (if different); or
- A department or agency may make an arrangement with VPM to refer a pre-screened candidate.

In either case, please refer to the criteria below when determining whether VPM is the appropriate next step in one’s professional development plan. Candidates need not demonstrate excellence in any of these criteria, but should have some working knowledge and experience as described. At the end of criteria are suggestions for steps interested individuals can take to prepare for VPM.

Criterion 1: Demonstrates leadership in work and relationships.

VPM candidates need not be supervisors or managers currently, if in the work they perform they must take “the long view” -- i.e.:

- Their work spans beyond their department; or
- They work with complex issues that require participation by various tiers of the organization, or by internal and external constituencies.

If they play a leadership role in guiding this work, and can describe it from a “big picture” as well as a task perspective, they meet this criterion.

Criterion 2: Demonstrates a command of supervision concepts and skills, if in a supervisory role.

VPM does not provide training in supervision skills, but does rely on an assumption that anyone currently serving in that role, or about to take one on, has already achieved competency in this area. Any VPM candidate who is a supervisor or who is in line to become one, must already demonstrate a command of the core competencies of supervision. This is most easily demonstrated by completing the Supervisor’s Development Program, or by taking another supervision skills program of similar weight. VPM staff reserves the right to defer candidates until they have completed such a program.

Criterion 3: Demonstrates aptitude in the areas of personal reflection and honesty; ability to give and receive feedback; and teamwork.

VPM calls on each participant to reflect on their strengths and challenges, and select and work on specific goals in personal development that will result in improved work-related communication and leadership. Individual applicants, and leaders who recommend candidates, should consider whether they are ready to “hit the ground

running” with these aptitudes. If not, a variety of appropriate developmental classes are available through The Summit: Center for State Employee Development or elsewhere.

Criterion 4: Demonstrates aptitude in the areas of analysis, planning, strategic and systems thinking.

Similarly, VPM calls on participants to apply increasing levels of planning, systems thinking, analysis and synthesis as the two years progress. We ask individual applicants and leaders referring employees to consider whether the candidate is ready to jump into this. They may benefit from first attending classes that introduce the more basic skills involved in strategy and systems work.

Criterion 5: Writes and communicates competently.

The VPM curriculum assumes participants are able to express themselves in writing and orally using good English language skills. Written materials are well-organized, and verbal presentations, whether informal or formal, are cogent, appropriate to the audience, and rely on their own strengths. Candidates need not be perfect in this area. There will be opportunities to receive input and feedback on both skill sets. If an applicant does not function well in communication skills, we will recommend they begin their development program with other courses, and apply to VPM later in their plan.

Criterion 6: Has department approval for the VPM fee, sufficient time available, and the support from immediate and higher supervisors/managers.

VPM is a substantial time commitment, and missing classes can hamper both the learning process and one’s ability to complete the course on schedule. Three-day courses occur quarterly in the first year, and a substantial team project occurs in the second year. VPM relies on the assumption that workloads will be adjusted for participants such that they may complete their VPM work as a part of a reasonable workload, and that participants will be afforded the flexibility they need to attend all classes and meetings, and to complete assignments outside of class.

Thank you for considering The Vermont Public Manager Program. Please visit our webpage for fees, course outlines, and an application form, at

http://humanresources.vermont.gov/training/the_summit/management_supervision_series/VPM

If you have questions or would like more information, please contact:

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